

# **GARDEN CITY COMMUNITY DAVINCI CHARTER SCHOOL**



Final Report  
Programmatic Audit Site Visit  
Conducted April 27, 2011



Idaho Charter School Network

Prepared by  
Idaho Charter School Network  
PO Box 1166  
Boise, ID 83701

# GARDEN CITY COMMUNITY DAVINCI CHARTER SCHOOL



**Address:** 9165 Chinden Blvd. Suite 101, Garden City, ID 83714

**New Address:** 5655 N. Glenwood Street, Boise, ID 83714

**School Phone:**

208-377-0011

**School website:**

<http://www.gardencityschool.org/>

**Date School Opened:** Fall 2006

**Authorized by:** Idaho Public Charter School Commission

**Administrator:** Ms. Cindy Hoovel

## **Programmatic Audit Site Visit Team:**

Diane Demarest, Executive Director, Idaho Charter School Network, Visit coordinator

Kelly Weaver, teacher, Idaho Charter School Network Project Assistant

Jackie Collins, Executive Director of Idaho Arts Charter School

# ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY

School Year represented by this data:	2010-2011	
<b>Enrollment</b>		
Range of grades offered:	K-8	
Students enrolled	121	
<b>Student demographics</b>		
Ethnicity:		
Caucasian	109	90%
Hispanic	3	2%
Black	3	2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1	1%
Multi-racial	0	0
Native American	0	0
Other	0	0
<b>Total Number of Students enrolled:</b>	121	
<b>Wait list data:</b>	Dependent upon grade level	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Free and reduced lunch	70	58%
Students with IEP	23	19%
English Language Learners	3	2%
Other special populations	0	0
<b>Staff Make Up:</b>	<b>Number</b>	
Head of School/ Principal	1	
Asst. to the Principal	0	
Business Mgr	1	
Certified teachers	8	
Non-certified teachers/Education Assts.	7	
Office/Administrative staff	2	

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

We submit this report to Garden City Community School (GCCS) and the Idaho Charter School Network (ICSN) as a summary of our observations. We recognize that in our brief one day visit, we were only able to see a cross-section of the school's full program. During this visit the team focused its attention on progress the school demonstrated since their last programmatic audit in all four of the goals of the accountability plan. The team endeavored to triangulate data from several sources to provide evidence of discrete performance indicators. The team focuses on validating the self-study conducted by the school and progress on previous recommendations with evidence of agreement or variance from the self-study.

We wish to express our gratitude to Garden City Community School for extending hospitality and openness to us during our visit. They provided the team with an array of organized documents and artifacts as evidence of their progress in the areas identified in the Accountability Plan. We commend Director, Cindy Hoovel and her team for their attention to organization of all documents in preparation for this site visit. Additionally we would like to thank all members of the school community - students, parents and board members - who took an active role in the site visit by providing documentation, attending focus group discussions, inviting the team into their classrooms or providing interviews.

To validate the performance of GCCS in all areas of school administration and performance relevant to the Accountability Plan, the site team conducted interviews and observations and reviewed school documents and records. The ICSN Accountability Plan for Idaho Public Charter Schools has four goals related to quality indicators for the operation of a charter school. GCCS invited an outside team to the school to assess the school's performance on the four goals of the Accountability Plan; namely,

- 1) Governance and Administrative Obligation
- 2) Quality academic program,
- 3) Stakeholder support, involvement and satisfaction, and
- 4) Continuous school improvement.

Our general impression is that GCCS successfully fulfills all governance and administrative obligations as provided in the state and federal law in fulfillment of their charter and in the execution of a learner-centered educational program. The team believes that GCCS has made considerable progress on all recommendations from previous audit and demonstrated a robust commitment to continuous improvement. We found that Goal 3: Stakeholder Support is the strongest area of performance for the school with a very impressive culture of data informed decision making and continuous improvement. Our team is grateful for the opportunity to visit and we submit our report in a spirit of collegiality and in the quest for educational excellence.

**Leadership Team at Garden City Community School:**

**GCCS Director:**

Cindy Hoovel

**GCCS Board of Directors:**

Laurel York Odell, President

Tim Richey, Treasurer

Matthew Shapiro, Member at Large

Michael Tetraul, Parent Representative

Anna Gamel, Member at Large

Sharon Dollinger, Member at Large

Anneleissa Balk, Recently Resigned

# Garden City Community School

VISIT CONDUCTED April 27, 2011

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Administrative Summary	3
Introductory Remarks	4
Executive Summary	7
Goal 1: Governance & Administration	9
Goal 2: Academic Program	14
Goal 3: Stakeholder Satisfaction	17
Goal 4: Continuous School Improvement	19
Summary January 2011 Audit	21

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*The Garden City Community School's mission is to provide a responsive, dynamic educational experience by placing the learner at the center; to evolve to meet the challenges of a changing world; and to serve a broad range of community needs. Through democratic principles and experience-proven practices, we foster responsibility, respect, responsiveness, and resourcefulness among all learners.*

It is clear to the site team that Garden City Community School (GCCS) is a school both committed to and actualizing its vision of establishing a school philosophy, embraced by teachers, the administrator, students, and parents which holds that education should be learner-centered.. Activities and instruction are designed around the needs, interests, abilities, and styles of our students. Instruction and curriculum exist to support the learner's success in the world. Students are allowed freedom with responsibility. Learning is community-based as the school has connected to other organizations to offer opportunities to students and their families. Curriculum is integrated for real world applications and there is an emphasis on arts integration as it enhances the learning experience.

It was very evident to the site visit team that GCCS is working to live fully into its mission - "*to provide a responsive, dynamic educational experience by placing the learner at the center; to evolve to meet the challenges of a changing world; and to serve a broad range of community needs*". We summarize for GCCS the following commendations:

*The board has made considerable progress in moving to a sustaining board. Ongoing training and communication keeping them focused on improvement. The Director has done an outstanding job in bringing additional resources to the school to strengthen data collection and analysis resulting in a model of data informed decision making. The school is strategically accomplishing their financial goals to complete a move to a new site in the fall of 2011. The Director has created a robust professional community and the entire staff works together to grow more completely into the mission and vision outlined in their charter..*

Based on observations and research conducted, the team had an opportunity to learn a great deal about the school; however, the group is also keenly aware that such a visit, while informative, offers a limited view of the school's characteristics. The collection of this data provides the basis for the recommendations to the board and educational leaders that are summarized below: .

*The team feels that GCCS has provided genuine evidence of their attention to all recommendations of the previous programmatic audit. We find that recommendations are in line with their spirit of continuous improvement we observed at the school. We encourage the board to continue their training and complete a self evaluation. We recommend that the board complete a comprehensive evaluation of the director. Continue their efforts to update and develop their next strategic plan and support the director, staff and students during the transition to a new facility. AYP is but one indicator of the growth of students, nonetheless, an important one that we encourage the leadership team to continue exploring and addressing.*

A team consisting of the administrator/director, two board members, a teacher, business manager, and secretary/parent completed the self-study for the school. The visiting team gathered a variety of data to validate the school's self-study and offer the following commendations and recommendations. The team was unanimous in its optimism that GCCS is well positioned to continue the important work of implementing its mission. There is evidence that school leaders and staff are constantly seeking more effective ways of implementing their school mission and realizing goals set forth in the school charter. Their vision, while an ambitious one, has strong support among their stakeholders. They have strong administrative and board leadership to realize this vision.



**Goal One: The charter school will fulfill all governance and administrative obligations as provided in state and federal law and in the school's charter.**

**Purpose/Intent of Goal:** Ensure that the charter is currently meeting all legal requirements including being aware of and abiding by current and relevant state and federal statutes, creating and maintaining an effective governance structure, filling required reports in a timely and accurate manner, maintaining a fiscally sound budget and practices, and providing strong administrative leadership for the school.

Six areas of governance were reviewed including: documents, relevant federal and state laws and procedures, governance structure, financials, administrative leadership and federal and state reporting and testing requirements. Overall Garden City Community School can be described as meeting the standard; however, a rating is assigned for each of the six areas of governance and administrative obligation so that strengths and opportunities are more readily discerned.

OBJECTIVES	SELF STUDY SCORE	TEAM SCORE	COMMENT
<b>a) School retains all legal documents pertaining to opening, operating, and reporting progress on the charter. These documents are accessible to or held by all people who would likely use them to perform their job duties.</b>			
1. Access to legal documents	4	4	<i>All documents were well organized and readily available to the team.</i>
2. Personnel files	4	4	<i>The team appreciated the attention to detail that the school demonstrated in their preparation for the visit. All files are thorough and appropriately secured and labeled.</i>
3. School filing system for student data	4	4	<i>All hard copy files are well organized and securely stored. Michelle is expert on Power School and electronic data records are access through this system.</i>

<b>b) School is aware of and in compliance with current relevant state and federal laws.</b>	<u>Self Study Score</u>	<u>Team Score</u>	<u>Comment</u>
1. Charter is knowledgeable about newly passed and existing legislation and state procedures	4	4	<i>Director stays involved in local meetings including those involving legislative changes.</i>

2. Leadership has a reliable way to address legal obligations.	4	4	
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<b>c) School maintains effective governance structure.</b>	<b><u>Self Study Score</u></b>	<b><u>Team Score</u></b>	<b><u>Comment</u></b>
1. Charter has bylaws that include major obligations, procedures regarding governing structure, guidelines for elections, dismissals, and other changes in the governing structure	4	4	
2. School has a policy or procedure manual of their own or an adopted version from another district with waivers if necessary	4	4	<i>Exemplary manuals.</i>
3. Conflicts of interest policy in place.	4	4	<i>We recommend that the board develop and implement a commitment letter.</i>
4. Charter has strategic goals that align with the mission or vision of the school.	3.5	3.5	<i>A strategic planning session has been set for the board and stakeholders over the summer</i>
5. Governing Board of directors are well trained for their responsibilities.	4	4	<i>Board attend training regularly.</i>
6. Roles of the administrator and the Board	4	4	
7. Board conducts self-evaluations	3.5	3	<i>The board has begun to take steps but has not developed an annual self evaluation.</i>
8. Board holds administrator accountable to its mission or vision.	4	3.5	<i>Administrator provides thorough written and oral reports at Board meetings. Evaluation tool is still being developed. Work with Capacity Builders is driven by Principal. The board would be advised to strengthen their processes for possible future leadership and to recognize the contributions of current principal.</i>
9. Board positions are systematically filled.	3.5	3	<i>Succession plan advised. Bringing in talent to committee work in preparation for future board positions. A nominating or succession committee would be advised.</i>

<b>d) School is financially solvent and stable in the use of its resources</b>	<b><u>Self Study Score</u></b>	<b><u>Team Score</u></b>	<b><u>Comment</u></b>
1. School budget is comprehensive,	4	4	<i>We commend GCCS for their</i>

balanced and adequate to support the mission of the school.			<i>effective Finance Committee that meets monthly. Good reserve.</i>
2. Enrollment is stable.	3.5	3.5	<i>Enrollment has been steady as the school looks for opportunities to relocate its facility.</i>
3. Financial Obligations (loans)	4	4	<i>Conservative financial operations has greatly strengthened GCCS's financial position.</i>
4. Facility Plan: The school leases or owns a facility that meets the needs of their student body and program and is within their means.	4	3	<i>The school uses its space effectively but has been looking to relocate to accommodate the needs of students and academic program. Several possible sites and options have been explored. They are definitely planning a move over the summer.</i>
5. Management and reporting of the budget	4	4	<i>Director and Business Manager along with Finance Committee work well together to ensure fiscal soundness of the school.</i>
6. Active Fundraising Plan supports school operations and sustainability.	3	3	<i>Fundraising varies from year to year and is an important aspect of the school in terms of continuing the role of art in its academic program.</i>
7. Staff benefits (health insurance, increasing salaries to retain teachers, less discipline problems than public schools, workman's compensation, flexible instructional design, life insurance, etc.)	4	4	
<b>e) School has strong administrative leadership</b>	<b><u>Self Study Score</u></b>	<b><u>Team Score</u></b>	<b><u>Comment</u></b>
1. The administrator is aware of and actively engaged in implementing the mission or vision of the school	4	4	<i>Director is very engaged with staff and students. Wednesday Community Circles, recognition of students, arts integration throughout the program and community connecting are all</i>

			<i>very evident and driven by administrator and staff.</i>
2. Administrator adequately allocates resources (time, money, materials, etc.) to achieve mission and goals of school.	4	4	<i>Director is commended for connecting with Idaho Capacity Builders and providing professional development opportunities as well as data tracking of performance-based learning.</i>
3. Administrator is aware of areas that need improvement within the school and reports these needs to the Board along with strategies on how to fulfill these needs	4	4	<i>Director provides thorough reports to Board and staff regarding data that drives decision-making regarding improvement efforts.</i>
4. Administrator is actively engaged in school-community relations that benefit the school	4	4	<i>Director connects with organizations within the community to help provide resources for staff and students (i.e. Capacity Builders, Boys and Girls Club)</i>
5. Administrator shows strong leadership skills that connect the Board to the school and its staff.	4	4	
6. Administrator effectively evaluates school personnel	4	4	<i>Teachers are aware of their evaluations and appreciate the feedback given by the director.</i>

<b>g) School files all required state and federal reports and completes required state tests in a timely and accurate manner</b>	<b><u>Self Study Score</u></b>	<b><u>Team Score</u></b>	<b><u>Comment</u></b>
1. Compliance with Idaho State Department of Education reporting and testing dates	4	4	
2. Compliance regarding grants received	4	4	
3. Accreditation	4	4	
<b>Total Points</b>	117	114.5 31 Items Avg Score 3.7	<b>Percent Agreement: 98%</b>

The team found a 98% level of agreement between the self-study and the programmatic visit and an average score of 3.82 for the areas covered in Goal One. There are a number of recommendations by

the team that may improve the performance of the school in the area of governance. Additionally, a more comprehensive self-evaluation by the entire board would be recommended.

**Goal One Commendations:** The team would like to commend GCCS in the following areas

- Strong skill set between Business Manager and Director as well as the creation of a Finance Committee helps ensure the fiscal health of the school, comprehensive oversight and board reporting.
- Board has attended a number of trainings and describes themselves as growing and moving to a sustaining board.
- Board has started the process to evaluate their strengths and start targeting board recruitment in areas of weakness.
- School is working hard to find a facility to allow for growth as well as a facility that will accommodate the needs of its academic program and students.
- As the Board looks to the future they are aware of building relationships that will grow both the influence and affluence of the board to strengthen the sustainability of the school.
- School pursues realistic fundraising options.
- Director is very organized and gives comprehensive written and oral reports to the Board.
- Director is very engaged in community relationship building, active in the charter community and very active in all essential SDE meetings at Superintendent level.
- Data informed decision making is notably increased in the last year.

**Goal One Recommendations:** The team respectfully recommends that GCCS:

- Director has done an outstanding job driving the continuous improvement and accountability for all aspects of the school. Over time, the team sees this as a function that should be equally shared by the board so that they can provide appropriate feedback and acknowledgement of this director and begin succession planning.
- Follow through on the board evaluation of the past strategic plan (2008-2011) and move forward to create a new strategic plan for the next three years.
- Follow through on board self evaluation and integrate into new strategic plan and also a Director evaluation that is consistent with the mission and goals of the school.

**Goal Two: The charter school will demonstrate a successful academic program.** Goal 2 includes the areas of school culture, curriculum & instruction, and assessment and reporting.

**INFRASTRUCTURE** (School Culture): The intent of this portion of Goal 2 is to ensure that the charter has proper infrastructure to enable students and staff to achieve educational goals.

- a) School is faithful to its charter, its stated mission and is making progress toward stated academic goals.
- b) School has clearly stated measurable program-related goals that reflect high expectations for students and staff; the academic program aligns with the charter document. Charter staff demonstrates reflective teaching practices

**Observations:** Based on teacher, parent and student interviews, and classroom observation episodes, it is apparent that the teachers and leadership of the school are working hard to implement the intentions of the charter. Garden City Community School has a robust program and highly engaged teaching staff.

<u>Objectives</u>	<u>Self Study Score</u>	<u>Team Score</u>	<u>Comment</u>
<b>a) School is faithful to its charter, its stated mission and is making progress toward stated academic goals.</b>			
1. Facility adequacy	2.5	2.5	<i>School uses space in creative ways to fits the needs of its students but is actively seeking other options for leasing a building that will more adequately meet these needs.</i>
2. Attendance requirements	4	4	
3. School-wide academic plan	3	3	<i>School is actively working with Idaho Capacity Builders to provide training for teachers to improve ISAT and IRI scores. They use data to drive decision making.</i>
4. Educational Goals	3.5	3	<i>School works to balance school mission and philosophy with high expectations of state and federal standards. Still struggling with AYP may be influenced by student turnover but also need to look at curriculum.</i>
5. Assessment of Progress	3.5	3.5	<i>School is working to improve</i>

6. Methods of Evaluation and Communication of Progress	3.5	3.5	<i>visual data that represents areas that need improvement as well as areas that show growth. Evidence of project-based learning is documented and displayed through photos, posters, and student portfolios.</i>
7. Professional Development	4	4	<i>Director has providing in-depth trainings for RTI and training within the Idaho Capacity Builders to help teachers meet the needs of their students.</i>
8. School Safety	4	4	<i>Staff works collectively to provide a safe environment for students despite the challenges presented by the facility and its neighboring businesses.</i>
9. School Climate/Culture	4	4	<i>Staff work as a team to promote a school culture that reflects the arts as well as their performance-based learning. Wednesday Morning Meetings provide a unique opportunity to showcase this aspect of the school climate/culture. Commend the school for the focused attention they have placed on Family Meetings and supporting positive behavior.</i>
10. Research-based Instructional Strategies	4	4	<i>Again, the staff are committed to training and finding research-based instructional strategies to meet the needs of their students.</i>
11. School progress with Idaho State Achievement Standards	3	2	<i>Although the school has not met AYP, they expect measureable growth in ISAT and IRI scores as they continue their training and enrollment stabilizes.</i>

<u>Objectives</u>	<u>Self Study Score</u>	<u>Team Score</u>	<u>Comment</u>
<b>b) Charter staff demonstrates reflective teaching practices</b>			
1. Curriculum: : Reading, Writing, Math, Science, History, Geography	4	3	<i>The curriculum supports the mission of the school. The team suggests that the teachers and instructional leaders review the strength of the academic program considering its challenges in meeting AYP.</i>
2. Evaluation: Teachers	4	4	<i>Formal and informal feedback given on a regular basis. Teachers report feeling valued. Evaluations are timely and Danielson aligned. Teachers are also surveyed through outside evaluator.</i>
3. Teacher Collaboration	4	4	<i>Teachers are provided with numerous professional development days and trainings. These help designate time for teacher collaboration. Additional time allowed weekly for collaboration. Robust professional learning community is evident.</i>
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>51</b>	48.5 14 Items Avg Score3.4	<b>Percent Agreement 95%</b>

**GOAL 2.** The team reached a 95% agreement with the school's self study with an average score of 3.4. The learning community for both teachers and students is a robust, hands-on one. The school continues to struggle with AYP. This is a very important indicator; however, students are demonstrating growth and gains in other areas (I.e. self-regulation, writing, presentation skills) should have an impact over time on standardized tests. The team encourages the school to continue their focused efforts to understand student achievement through data. The team offers the following commendations to the school:

**Goal 2 Commendations:** The team would like to commend GCCS in the following areas:

- Director is data-driven and allocates resources towards training so that her staff can help identify and execute instructional strategies for improvement.
- Partnership with Idaho Capacity Builders has provided additional training and data support.



- Facility space is used to maximize the learning taking place and display student work.
- Collaboration time and professional development for teachers is a priority.
- New staff have been well oriented, supported and integrated into the school culture.
- Teacher evaluations are formative and give a lot of feedback. Teachers are aware of the process and appreciate its value in their development.
- Teachers share in the leadership of the school. Director Hoovel has created a robust professional learning community.
- Teachers gather and use visual data to inform instructional decisions.
- Positive culture and climate of the school is evident and increased focus on consistency of implementing Adlerian strategies.
- Heavy emphasis on arts integration as stated in the charter and evidenced by the work displayed in the classrooms and around the school
- Teachers working to develop comprehensive core set of assessments.

**Recommendations:** The team respectfully recommends to GCCS that:

- Analyze the strength of the curriculum and academic program to determine how it is affecting ISAT and/or IRI scores.
- Students not making AYP may need more intensive instruction and/or curriculum to meet proficiency standards. Evaluate impact of Title 1 programs.
- Continue to communicate student learning to parents and other stakeholders through documentation, student led conferences and school reports.

<p><b>Goal Three: The charter school will show and plan for strong stakeholder support, involvement and satisfaction</b></p>
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Purpose/Intent of this Goal: Ensure the charter has stakeholders who are supportive, well informed and involved in the charter school. Stakeholders: def. Board, administration, teachers, students, parents, PTA, community

	<u>Self Study Score</u>	<u>Team Score</u>	<u>Comment</u>
<b>The charter school will show and plan for strong stakeholder support, involvement, and satisfaction</b>			
1. Stakeholders participate and contribute to school mission	4	4	<i>The Community Council offers parents the opportunity to be involved in the school's mission. However, a PTO is being considered due to the interest of a number of parents.</i>

2. Communication with stakeholders	4	4	
3. Stakeholder satisfaction and engagement.	4	4	<i>91% families represented in surveys done by Center for Educational Effectiveness. This new resource for surveying all stakeholders has increased reliable information about teacher and parent perceptions.</i>
4. Plan for Improvement	4	4	<i>School is using data from surveys to inform their decisions and drive improvement.</i>
<b>Total Scores</b>	16	16 Avg Score 4.0	<b>Percent Agreement: 100%</b>

**Goal Three** assesses stakeholder engagement and satisfaction. Overall we found that the stakeholders of GCCS are very satisfied and engaged. Some students come from very challenged families and the school is very supportive of these families though they may not have the luxury of high levels of participation. The school is creative in providing a wide variety of opportunities for engagement. During student presentations, many parents and grandparents were present. School reports high participation in student led conferences.

**Commendations:** The team would like to commend GCCS in the following areas:

- Teachers report that they love the school and enjoy being there.
- Using CEE to conduct surveys of stakeholders provides unique insights and reliable results and analyses.
- Students appreciate the integration of art into their curriculum and report that they enjoy learning and have positive relationships with their teachers.
- Students appreciate the small class sizes as well as the blended grade levels. They feel they get more individualized instruction and that they are challenged but also support one another.
- Students were able to describe different projects that they believed taught them lifelong lessons.

**Recommendations:** The team respectfully recommends to GCCS that:

- Students express concern about transitions to junior high and high school. Perhaps a partnership or mentoring with past GCCS students could help support students who will be transitioning.
- Continue to communicate with stakeholders about plans for new facility.
- You have many community partners. Consider having CEE survey these partners to gain more insight into their perception of the school.

<p><b>Goal Four: The charter school will plan for short and long term continuous improvement.</b></p>
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Purpose/Intent of this Goal: Ensure the charter clearly recognizes where growth is essential.

<b>The charter school will plan for short and long term continuous school improvement</b>	<b><u>Self Study Score</u></b>	<b><u>Team Score</u></b>	<b><u>Comment</u></b>
1. The school has a five-year <b><u>Strategic Plan</u></b> and actively uses it to direct its efforts and measure its progress.	4	3	<i>Board and other key members are planning to develop a new three-year strategic plan over the summer as the previous plan comes to an end. We encourage broad stakeholder input - may be from previous or new surveys. Consider a robust plan to tackle academic performance.</i>
2. School leadership is reflective and uses data to drive improvement.	4	4	<i>Director created many new opportunities to use data to inform school improvement through her relationship with Capacity Builder. She is open and constantly seeking additional measures to guide improvement.</i>
3. Continuous Improvement is planned, monitored and accomplished.	4	4	<i>Previous strategic plan will need to be reviewed and analyzed to show what was achieve. In creating a new plan, the data available from many sources ( financial, academic, satisfaction) will be essential in creating and executing a comprehensive plan.</i>
<b>Total Scores</b>	12	11 Avg Score 3.7	<b>Percent Agreement: 92%</b>

GOAL 4 refers to the school's efforts for continuous improvement. The leadership and staff of GCCS embrace continuous improvement as demonstrated by their relationship with the Idaho Capacity Builders and the attention of the Director and teachers to data informed decision making. They have monitored progress in their financial matters and made remarkable gains.

The director has worked continuously to develop the expertise of the staff through transitions in hiring, evaluation and professional development. The school has been outstanding in gathering and reviewing data as well as a constant pattern of reflection and change.

**Goal 4: Commendations:** The team would like to commend GCCS on the following:

- Progress on recommendations from previous audit include developed board manual, rehire of a skilled secretary to support administrator, maturation of the board toward sustaining board, use of data to monitor progress, RTI and Family Meetings with improved behavioral outcomes, communication with stakeholders through detailed director's reports, WISE Tool and other data sources increasingly integrated, noted growth of professional learning community and mentoring program for new staff.
- Outstanding use of the Capacity Builder opportunity.
- Open and reflective disposition of whole staff.
- Financially, they are the most stable they have been largely due to very responsible and fiscally conservative leadership. They have attracted support for a new building. They have maintained a steady enrollment and been very frugal which has allowed them to weather the severe budget cuts of the last few years and get ahead.

**Recommendations:** The team respectfully recommends that GCCS:

- Continue Title 1 and Reading Clubs if you see continuous gains in the coming year. Otherwise you may need to consider a more rigorous plan to tackle AYP weakness. May be additional resources invested in remediation program to increase ISAT scores in particular subgroups.
- Include wide audience of stakeholders as you build new strategic plan.
- Be sure to include all areas of the school operation in strategic planning.

Goal	Score Level of Agreement	Commendations	Recommendations
<p><b>1. Governance:</b> <i>The Charter School will fulfill all governance and administrative obligations as provided in state &amp; federal law and in the school's charters.</i></p>	<p>98% Agreement</p> <p>Average Score 3.7</p> <p>Functioning Evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong skill set between Business Manager and Director as well as the creation of a Finance Committee helps ensure the fiscal health of the school, comprehensive oversight and board reporting.</li> <li>• Board has attended a number of trainings and describes themselves as growing and moving to a sustaining board.</li> <li>• Board has started the process to evaluate their strengths and start targeting board recruitment in areas of weakness.</li> <li>• School is working hard to find a facility to allow for growth as well as a facility that will accommodate the needs of its academic program and students.</li> <li>• As the Board looks to the future they are aware of building relationships that will grow both the influence and affluence of the board to strengthen the sustainability of the school.</li> <li>• School pursues realistic fundraising options.</li> <li>• Director is very organized and gives comprehensive written and oral reports to the Board.</li> <li>• Director is very engaged in community relationship building, active in the charter community and very active in all essential SDE meetings at Superintendent level.</li> <li>• Data informed decision making is notably increased in the last year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director has done an outstanding job driving the continuous improvement and accountability for all aspects of the school. Over time, the team sees this as a function that should be equally shared by the board so that they can provide appropriate feedback and acknowledgement of this director and begin succession planning.</li> <li>• Follow through on the board evaluation of the past strategic plan (2008-2011) and move forward to create a new strategic plan for the next three years.</li> <li>• Follow through on board self evaluation and integrate into new strategic plan and also a Director evaluation that is consistent with the mission and goals of the school.</li> </ul>

<p><b>2. Academic Program:</b> <i>The charter school will demonstrate a successful academic program</i></p>	<p>95% Agreement</p> <p>Average Score 3.4</p> <p>Functioning Evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director is data-driven and allocates resources towards training so that her staff can help identify and execute instructional strategies for improvement.</li> <li>• Partnership with Idaho Capacity Builders has provided additional training and data support.</li> <li>• Facility space is used to maximize the learning taking place and display student work.</li> <li>• Collaboration time and professional development for teachers is a priority.</li> <li>• New staff have been well oriented, supported and integrated into the school culture.</li> <li>• Teacher evaluations are formative and give a lot of feedback. Teachers are aware of the process and appreciate its value in their development.</li> <li>• Teachers share in the leadership of the school. Director Hoovel has created a robust professional learning community.</li> <li>• Teachers gather and use visual data to inform instructional decisions.</li> <li>• Positive culture and climate of the school is evident and increased focus on consistency of implementing Adlerian strategies.</li> <li>• Heavy emphasis on arts integration as stated in the charter and evidenced by the work displayed in the classrooms and around the school</li> <li>• Teachers working to develop comprehensive core set of assessments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze the strength of the curriculum and academic program to determine how it is affecting ISAT and/or IRI scores.</li> <li>• Students not making AYP may need more intensive instruction and/or curriculum to meet proficiency standards. Evaluate impact of Title 1 programs.</li> <li>• Continue to communicate student learning to parents and other stakeholders through documentation, student led conferences and school reports.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Stakeholder Support:</b> <i>The charter school will show and plan for strong stakeholder support, involvement and satisfaction</i></p>	<p>100% Agreement</p> <p>Average Score 4.0</p> <p>Exemplary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers report that they love the school and enjoy being there.</li> <li>• Using CEE to conduct surveys of stakeholders provides unique insights and reliable results and analyses.</li> <li>• Students appreciate the integration of art into their curriculum and report that they enjoy learning and have positive relationships with their</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students express concern about transitions to junior high and high school. Perhaps a partnership or mentoring with past GCCS students could help support students who will be transitioning.</li> <li>• Continue to communicate with stakeholders about plans for new facility.</li> <li>• You have many community partners. Consider having</li> </ul>

	Evidence	<p>teachers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students appreciate the small class sizes as well as the blended grade levels. They feel they get more individualized instruction and that they are challenged but also support one another.</li> <li>Students were able to describe different projects that they believed taught them lifelong lessons.</li> </ul>	CEE survey these partners to gain more insight into their perception of the school.
<p><b>4. Continuous Improvement:</b>  <i>The charter school will plan for short and long term continuous improvement.</i></p>	<p>92% Agreement</p> <p>Average Score 3.7</p> <p>Functioning Evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress on recommendations from previous audit include developed board manual, rehire of a skilled secretary to support administrator, maturation of the board toward sustaining board, use of data to monitor progress, RTI and Family Meetings with improved behavioral outcomes, communication with stakeholders through detailed director's reports, WISE Tool and other data sources increasingly integrated, noted growth of professional learning community and mentoring program for new staff.</li> <li>Outstanding use of the Capacity Builder opportunity.</li> <li>Open and reflective disposition of whole staff.</li> <li>Financially, they are the most stable they have been largely due to very responsible and fiscally conservative leadership. They have attracted support for a new building. They have maintained a steady enrollment and been very frugal which has allowed them to weather the severe budget cuts of the last few years and get ahead.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue Title 1 and Reading Clubs if you see continuous gains in the coming year. Otherwise you may need to consider a more rigorous plan to tackle AYP weakness. May be additional resources invested in remediation program to increase ISAT scores in particular subgroups.</li> <li>Include wide audience of stakeholders as you build new strategic plan.</li> <li>Be sure to include all areas of the school operation in strategic planning.</li> </ul>

